

The second brood of Green Carpet *Colostygia pectinataria* (Knoch), described by Skinner as "occasional and partial", also seems to be growing in strength. Throughout August and September 2000 the species was very common in actinic traps in the Watford area. Plant refers to the August brood as being smaller than the May-July emergence, but this no longer appears to be the case: Hayward (2000. *AES Bulletin* 59: 137-164), in urban Berkshire (vice-county 22), reports the reverse, and describes the species as increasing. The National Moth Night results referred to above are similar to those for the Straw Dot.

A. A. Allen (*Ent. Rec.* 112: 10) puzzles over the voltinism of Willow Beauty *Peribatodes rhomboidaria* (D. & S.), another species which may be in the process of becoming double-brooded. Both Plant and Skinner refer to a possible second brood in September as occasional and partial. My own records for actinic light at Garston, covering the years 1995-2000, show a date range of 14 June to 9 September, with later individuals on 23 September 1998 and at mv light on 16 and 26 September 2000. Peak numbers are reached here in mid-August, rendering separation of the two suspected generations more difficult than in those species previously discussed. This species was also widely recorded through southern Britain (north to North Wales) during National Moth Night 2000. Allen's note bears an unfortunate misprint: the date referred to in the second line should read 11 June, not 1 (A. A. Allen, *pers. comm.*).— C. M. EVERETT, The Lodge, Kytes Drive, Watford, Herts WD25 9NZ.

More on the changing voltinism of Hertfordshire's moths

I was most interested to receive Colin Everett's contribution, above, on apparent changes in the voltinism of several moth species in southern Hertfordshire (which also falls within the "London Area" as defined in my 1993 work to which he refers). That work, of course, summarised a large number of records from a range of localities throughout the region covered, between the North Downs in Surrey and Kent, across the London Basin and out to the Chiltern chalk on the Hertfordshire boundary with Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire. Inevitably, it took no real account of local variations, but presented an overview for the wider area. That having been said, it is clear that there are trends, in some species, towards larger, or even new, autumn broods. I cannot easily provide updated London Area data, but can do so for Hertfordshire, the data for which is fully computerised.

The Herts Moth Database shows records of Ruby Tiger *Phragmatobia fuliginosa* in the period 15 July to 18 August in the years from 1995 to 2001. This accords well with Everett's results of 20 July to 16 August. The same database (excluding Everett's own data), indicates records of Straw Dot *Rivula sericealis* on 30 May, 14-24 June, 2-4 July, 21-29 July and 5-25 August (inclusive dates indicating at least one record on every date in that band).

Hertfordshire data for the Green Carpet, is most interesting, as it suggests that there may in fact be three broods in a year. Records stop abruptly at 24 June, re-appear from 7-29 July then stop again until 13 August after which they continue to 23 September (Everett's records having been excluded). This present year, the August/September brood is certainly a large one, though almost all the individuals are diminutive.

Post-1994 Hertfordshire records of Willow Beauty *Peribatodes rhomboidaria*, with those submitted by Everett similarly eliminated, run from 16 June to 23 September, again in good accord with the Watford data. This date band is not continuous however, and fragments into six discrete units: 16-24 June, 1 July, 7 July, 15 July-29 August, 10 September then 21-23 September.—COLIN W. PLANT, 14 West Road, Bishops Stortford, Hertfordshire CM23 3QP.

Notes on possible overwintering Red Admirals *Vanessa atalanta* (L.) (Lep.: Nymphalidae) in Cambridge

There have been a number of notes in this journal recording the occurrence of Red Admirals *Vanessa atalanta* in Britain during the winter months (eg., *Ent. Rec.* **112**: 130; 187; 214) and such records are also a regular feature of the annual immigration reviews (eg., *Ent. Rec.* **112**: 68; 248). Many others continue to be reported in sundry publications and via telephone and electronic media. In Hertfordshire (vice-county 20), although I have no personal observations earlier than 20 March, winter records are now reported annually here or in adjoining Middlesex (Murray et. al. 1997-2001. *Hertfordshire and Middlesex Butterfly and Moth Reports*. Butterfly Conservation).

In Cambridge (VC 29), a Red Admiral was seen in a quadrangle at Wolfson College almost daily between 5 October and 17 November 2000, the dependability of this individual being in contrast to the transience of those moving south during the pronounced autumn migration that year. On several occasions it was seen to rest in the branches of a mature *Cedrus atlantica* cultivar, and this is likely to have been a regular roosting site. At nearby Trumpington, another Red Admiral was active in the late morning sunshine of 17 February 2001. The air temperature was about 8°C, and the habitat again included mature conifers as well as dense ivy.

The above observations demonstrate the continued difficulty in confidently ascribing winter records of this species either to overwintering, or to early immigration. My initial response was tentatively to allocate the Trumpington individual to the former category, as the previous five nights had all produced temperatures at or below freezing point, making unassisted movement into the country seem unlikely. Nevertheless, at least ten other Red Admirals were reported during February 2001, and most coincided, as did mine, with a sequence of records of Painted Lady *Vanessa cardui* (L.) in the south and south-west of England, most of which appear to have been migrants (*Atropos* **13**: 68).—C. M. EVERETT, The Lodge, Kytes Drive, Watford, Herts WD25 9NZ.